THE DICKENSIAN

A Magazine for Dickens Lovers
and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

VOL. III. APRIL, 1907. No. 4.

WHEN FOUND—

LOVERS of the works of Charles Dickens are continually finding opinions in them which are most applicable to present-day circumstances. In *Bleak House*, readers learn that Mrs. Jellyby neglected her husband, her children, and household duties, in order to attend to the subject of Africa, "with a view to the general cultivation of the coffee berry—AND the natives—and the happy settlement, on the banks of the African rivers, of our superabundant home population." Mr. Jarndyce, on requesting Esther Summerson to inform him what she and Ada Clare thought of Mrs. Jellyby, received a reply which may interest those who are wondering what became of husband and children during the time the Suffragette was engaged at Westminster "fighting" for her vote. The following is the reply Mr. Jarndyce received to his question: "We thought that perhaps it is right to begin with the obligations of home, sir; and that, perhaps, while those are overlooked and neglected, no other duties can possibly be substituted for them."

* * *

Mr. C. Findon Waters and his friends at Sudbury seem determined to leave no stone unturned in their efforts to prove that that town is the original of Eatanswill, and we understand that some very important data in regard to it will shortly be made public. In the meantime an "Eatanswill" Club has been formed with the object of studying "the connexions of Sudbury with the works of Charles Dickens," and also with the further object of enlivening "our dull and prosaic lives with Pickwickian humour." The first meeting was held at the Bull Hotel, Sudbury, on 4 March, and began with a supper. The proceedings which followed were of a convivial and amusing description.

* * *

Each member is given a Pickwickian name, as is the case in the "Pickwick Bicycle Club," of London, and on the occasion referred to "The Mayor of Eatanswill" (Alderman Making) occupied the chair, churchwarden pipes were in great request, and candles formed the means of illumination. Mr. C. Findon Waters (Mine Host) addressed the club on the question, "Is Sudbury Eatanswill?" and seemed to make out an excellent case in its favour. Afterwards recitals, songs, and toasts followed by Mr. Stiggins, Mr. Pickwick, Snodgrass, Wardle, Sam Weller, Tony Weller, Captain Boldwig, Lieutenant Tappleton, Hon. Samuel Slumkey, Serjeant Buzfuz, Mr. Pott, Mr. Jingle, Dr. Slammer, "the Leader of the Blues," Horatio Fizkin, and Mr. Solomon Pell.

We fell into the error last month of giving publicity to a statement that a certain Mrs. Hayes, of Manchester, was the original of Polly Toodle, the nurse in *Dombey and Son*, without first inquiring into its authenticity from those who are in a position to know. We do not for a moment suggest that the statement was sent to us in anything but all good faith; but we now learn that although Mrs. Hayes was a nurse in the family of Mrs. Burnett, she was not, and could not have been, the prototype of Polly Toodle, for there was no original for the character. And we are given further to understand that Dickens did not write letters to her, nor was it necessary for him to urge her to take care of the little boy, seeing that Master Burnett had both father and mother living.

* * *

The original drawing by "Phiz" of the Trial Scene in the *Pickwick Papers* was sold at Messrs. Hodgson's sale-rooms on 20 March for £50. The drawing is the one actually used for the plate of the famous picture familiar to all, wherein Serjeant Buzfuz is depicted denouncing the immortal Pickwick for his "systematic villainy." The first drawing which "Phiz" executed on this subject did not meet with the novelist's approval, and at the suggestion of the latter certain modifications were made and resulted in this, the second drawing, which was accepted and etched for the book. It will be seen that the drawing differs considerably from the first, which appeared in facsimile in the Victoria Edition of the book published by Chapman & Hall in 1887, and which we reproduce as our frontispiece this month.

* * *

We are very pleased to note that a new branch of the Dickens Fellowship has been formed at Gloucester, chiefly owing to the efforts of Mr. H. W. Bruton, a well-known authority on Dickens in the city, and he has been unanimously elected the first President. Mr. John E. Herbert, of 97 Northgate Street, Gloucester, is Hon. Secretary, and so successful has the branch proved that already it numbers eighty members. A branch is in course of formation at Canterbury with Mr. A. C. Turley, of the City Surveyor's Office, as Hon. Secretary. Branches have also just been formed in Ottawa, Canada, with Mr. Leslie K. Borkett, 490 Cooper Street, Ottawa, as Hon. Secretary, and in Philadelphia, U.S.A., with Dr. B. F. Baer, 1819 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, in a similar capacity.

* * *

We understand that fifteen hundred pounds sterling will have to be spent in cleaning the windows of the London County Council Schools during the Easter recess. This seems a lot of money, and prompts one to suggest that the adoption of Mr. Wackford Squeers's mode of dealing with such matters might be productive of a little economy at any rate, even if the spelling had to be sacrificed somewhat.

* * *

The Dickens Concordance, by Mary Williams, which has been promised for a long time, is at length to make its appearance. It is to contain a complete list of the characters and places mentioned in the works of Charles Dickens, and also a full alphabetical list. It will be published shortly by Mr. Francis Griffiths. THE EDITOR.

PET PRISONERS*

By CHARLES DICKENS

CHAPTER III

WE venture altogether to protest against the citation, in support of this system, of assumed repentance which has stood no test or trial in the working world. We consider that it proves nothing, and is worth nothing, except as a discouraging sign of that spiritual egotism and presumption of which we have already spoken. It is not peculiar to the separate system at Reading; Miss Martineau, who was on the whole decidedly favourable to the separate prison at Philadelphia, observed it there. "The cases I became acquainted with," says she, "were not all hopeful. Some of the convicts were so stupid as not to be relied upon, more or less. Others canted so detestably, and were (always in connexion with their cant) so certain that they should never sin more, that I have every expectation that they will find themselves in prison again some day. One fellow, a sailor, notorious for having taken more lives than probably any man in the United States, was quite confident that he should be perfectly virtuous henceforth. He should never touch anything stronger than tea, or lift his hand against money or life. I told him I thought he could not be sure of all this till he was within sight of money and the smell of strong liquors; and that he was more confident than I should like to be. He shook his shock of red hair at me, and glared with his one ferocious eye, as he said he knew all about it. He had been the worst of men, and Christ had had mercy on his poor soul." (Observe again, as in the general case we have put, that he is not at all troubled about the souls of the people whom he had killed.)

Let us submit to our readers another instance from Mr. Field, of the wholesome state of mind produced by the separate system. "The 25th of March, in the last year, was the day appointed for a general fast, on account of a threatened famine. The following note is in my journal of that day. 'During the evening I visited many prisoners, and found with much satisfaction that a large proportion of them had observed the day in a manner becoming to their own situation, and the purpose for which it had been set apart. I think it right to record the following remarkable proof of the effect of discipline. . . . They were all supplied with their usual rations. I went first this evening to the cells of the prisoners recently committed for trial (Ward A. 1), and amongst these (upwards of twenty) I found that but three had abstained from any portion of their food. I then visited twenty-one convicted prisoners who had spent some considerable time in the gaol (Ward C. 1), and amongst them I found that some had altogether abstained from food, and of the whole number two-thirds had partially abstained.'" We will take it for granted that this was not because they had more than they could eat, though we know that with such a dietary even that sometimes happens, especially in the case of persons long confined. "The remark of one prisoner whom I questioned concerning his abstinence was, I believe, sincere, and was very pleasing. 'Sir, I have not felt able to eat to-day, whilst I have thought of those poor

* Identified and reprinted for the first time from *Household Words*, 27 April, 1850.

starving people; but I hope that I have prayed a good deal that God will give *them* something to eat.'"

If this were not pattern penitence, and the thought of those poor starving people had honestly originated with that man, and were really on his mind, we want to know why he was not uneasy, every day in the contemplation of his soup, meat, bread, potatoes, cocoa-nibs, milk, molasses, and gruel, and its contrast to the fare of "those poor starving people" who, in some form or other, were taxed to pay for it?

We do not deem it necessary to comment on the authorities quoted by Mr. Field to show what a fine thing the separate system is, for the health of the body; how it never affects the mind except for good; how it is the true preventive of pulmonary disease; and so on. The deduction we must draw from such things is, that Providence was quite mistaken in making us gregarious, and that we had better all shut ourselves up directly. Neither will we refer to that "talented criminal," Dr. Dodd, whose exceedingly indifferent verses applied to a system now extinct, in reference to our penitentiaries for convicted prisoners. Neither, after what we have quoted from Lord Grey, need we refer to the likewise quoted report of the American authorities, who are perfectly sure that no extent of confinement in the Philadelphia Prison has ever affected the intellectual powers of any prisoner. Mr. Croker cogently observes, in the Good-natured Man, that either his hat must be on his head, or it must be off. By a parity of reasoning, we conclude that both Lord Grey and the American authorities cannot possibly be right—unless indeed the notoriously settled habits of the American people, and the absence of any approach to restlessness in the national character, render them unusually good subjects for protracted seclusion, and an exception from the rest of mankind.

In using the term "pattern penitence" we beg it to be understood that we do not apply it to Mr. Field, or to any other chaplain, but to the system; which appears to us to make these doubtful converts all alike. Although Mr. Field has not shown any remarkable courtesy in the instance we have set forth in a note, it is our wish to show all courtesy to him, and to his office, and to his sincerity in the discharge of its duties. In our desire to represent him with fairness and impartiality, we will not take leave of him without the following quotation from his book:—

"Scarcely sufficient time has yet expired since the present system was introduced, for me to report much concerning discharged criminals. Out of a class so degraded—the very dregs of the community—it can be no wonder that some, of whose improvement I cherished the hope, should have relapsed. Disappointed in a few cases I have been, yet by no means discouraged, since I can with pleasure refer to many whose conduct is affording proof of reformation. Gratifying indeed have been some accounts received from liberated offenders themselves, as well as from clergymen of parishes to which they have returned. I have also myself visited the homes of some of our former prisoners, and have been cheered by the testimony given, and the evident signs of improved character which I have there observed. Although I do not venture at present to describe the particular cases of prisoners, concerning whose reformation I feel much confidence, because, as I have

stated, the time of trial has hitherto been short; yet I can with pleasure refer to some public documents which prove the happy effects of similar discipline in other establishments."

It should also be stated that the Reverend Mr. Kingsmill, the chaplain of the Model Prison at Pentonville, in his calm and intelligent report made to the Commissioners on the first of February, 1849, expresses his belief "that the effects produced here upon the character of prisoners, have been encouraging in a high degree."

But, we entreat our readers once again to look at that Model Prison dietary (which is essential to the system, though the system is so very healthy of itself); to remember the other enormous expenses of the establishment; to consider the circumstances of this old country, with the inevitable anomalies and contrasts it must present; and to decide, on temperate reflection, whether there are any sufficient reasons for adding this monstrous contrast to the rest. Let us impress upon our readers that the existing question is, not between this system and the old abuses of the old profligate gaols (with which, thank Heaven, we have nothing to do), but between this system and the associated silent system, where the dietary is much lower, where the annual cost of provision, management, repairs, clothing, etc., does not exceed, on a liberal average, £25 for each prisoner; where many prisoners are, and every prisoner would be (if due accommodation were provided in some over-crowded prisons), locked up alone, for twelve hours out of every twenty-four, and where, while preserved from contamination, he is still one of a society of men, and not an isolated being, filling his whole sphere of view with a diseased dilation of himself. We hear that the associated silent system is objectionable, because of the number of punishments it involves for breaches of the prison discipline; but how can we, in the same breath, be told that the resolutions of prisoners for the misty future are to be trusted, and that, on the least temptation, they are so little to be relied on as to the solid present? How can I set the pattern penitence against the career that preceded it, when I am told that if I put that man with other men, and lay a solemn charge upon him not to address them by word or sign, there are such and such great chances that he will want the resolution to obey?

Remember that this separate system, though commended in the English Parliament and spreading in England, has not spread in America, despite of all the steeple-chase riders in the United States. Remember that it has never reached the State most distinguished for its learning, for its moderation, for its remarkable men of European reputation, for the excellence of its public Institutions. Let it be tried here, on a limited scale, if you will, with fair representatives of all classes of prisoners: let Captain Macconnochie's system be tried: but, only as a part of some general system for raising up the prostrate portion of the people of this country, and not as an exhibition of such astonishing consideration for crime, in comparison with want and work. Any prison built, at a great expenditure, for this system, is comparatively useless for any other; and the ratepayers will do well to think of this, before they take it for granted that it is a proved boon to the country which will be enduring.

Under the separate system, the prisoners work at trades. Under the

associated silent system, the Magistrates of Middlesex have almost abolished the treadmill. Is it no part of the legitimate consideration of this important point of work, to discover what kind of work the people always filtering through the gaols of large towns—the pickpocket, the sturdy vagrant, the habitual drunkard, and the begging-letter impostor—like least, and to give them that work to do in preference to any other? It is out of fashion with the steeple-chase riders we know; but we would have, for all such characters, a kind of work in gaols, badged and degraded as belonging to gaols only, and never done elsewhere. And we must avow that, in a country circumstanced as England is, with respect to labour and labourers, we have strong doubts of the propriety of bringing the results of prison labour into the over-stocked market. On this subject some public remonstrances have recently been made by tradesmen; and we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that they are well-founded.

(*The end*)

CHEERYBLE HOUSE

THE LAST OF A MANCHESTER DICKENS LANDMARK

"CHEERYBLE HOUSE," Cannon Street, Manchester, formerly the warehouse of William and Daniel Grant, the "Cheeryble Brothers" of *Nicholas Nickleby*, is shortly to be demolished, in order to facilitate street improvements. A party of members of the Manchester Branch of the Dickens Fellowship paid a visit to the building on 9 March last. At the formal proceedings, over which Mr. J. D. Chew presided, Mr. Arthur Humphreys, Hon. Secretary, spoke of the interest the house had for all lovers of the works of Charles Dickens. Their branch, he said, was fortunate in including amongst its members the Rev. W. Hume Elliot, author of the most authoritative biography of the Grants that had been published, and drew attention to the fact. Mr. Joseph Crompton, who was employed by the Messrs. Grant in that very building and had many pleasant recollections of the kindness and generosity of his old masters, was one of the party. When they recollected all that "Cheeryble House" had stood for, both with regard to its commercial importance in the history of the city and its associations with English literature, each of the members present would, on leaving, and without being unduly sentimental, bid it a grateful and an affectionate farewell.

Mr. Joseph Crompton, who was employed at the warehouse for eleven years, from 1849 to 1859, related a number of characteristic anecdotes, illustrating the genial, though brusque, nature of "Brother Charles," and acted as pilot to the party through the building. The old safe, chair, and desk were pointed out, and also the places which were usually occupied by the Grant Brothers. Mr. Crompton related how on one occasion when coming downstairs with unusual precipitancy he narrowly escaped alighting on the gouty toes of Mr. Daniel Grant, who remarked, "You're a very active young man—here's a sovereign for you." A picture of the house will be found on page 95 of the *Dickensian* for 1905.

BOZ AND HIS PUBLISHERS

By PERCY FITZGERALD, M.A., F.S.A.

III

FROM RICHARD BENTLEY TO CHAPMAN AND HALL

CHAPTER I

NO one was ever so highly strung as Dickens. He suffered in the most acute way from any mental strain—particularly from suspense. He could not bear anything disagreeable to be "hanging over his head": "it must be settled at once." This have I often heard him say, and it should be borne in mind and be a matter for sincerest pity when we read of his occasional disputes.

In October, 1837, the public was again told by advertisement that there was actually "in the press," in three volumes post octavo—"Barnaby Rudge, *A Story of the Riots of London*, 1780, by Charles Dickens, Esq. (Boz), Author of the *Pickwick Papers*."

This was really mysterious, yet it must have come from the author. To be "in the press," it must have been actually written. Three volumes could not have been supplied in a hurry or writing against time. If it were to be issued in parts he could keep up with the press. Was the book really completed and held over till the suitable moment arrived? Mr. Forster had not noticed these successive advertisements, but insinuates that it was a "bogus" claim on the part of Bentley and not worthy of consideration.

Again, we find on the fly-leaf of the number of *Bentley's Miscellany* for December 1, 1838, yet another flamboyant proclamation :—

> NOTICE
>
> THE Readers of Bentley's Magazine are respectfully informed that immediately on the completion of *Oliver Twist* in his *Miscellany*, Mr. Charles Dickens will commence a new story, to be entitled
>
> BARNABY RUDGE.
>
> *New Burlington Street.*

Pickwick had not yet "caught on," which will account for the moderate terms demanded for this new work—about £70 a volume. But to think of the daring and boldness of the venture. A long and important story to be completed within six months, while he was writing from month to month this other great story. One was to be serious, the other comic; and he was perfectly confident as to his power of performing the feat. Yet it is certain that if he had really undertaken the task he would have accomplished it. But this affair of the *Barnaby* novel is altogether perplexing. As we have seen, Dickens had contracted with Macrone for £200: a year or so later we find it in Bentley's hands for a sum five times as much. He must have bought Macrone's interest.*

* It should be noted that Macrone was living under the same roof with him at Furnival's Inn, so they must have been on very intimate and confidential terms.

But now Boz began to have misgivings as to whether he had not bound himself to be a slave to his publisher. He had forgotten the terms of agreement for the second novel, was growing suspicious and seeking to find some way of escape. He consulted his intrepid friend Forster, telling him that he had discovered to his alarm he had no copy of the agreement, but from some memoranda was seriously frightened lest the publisher had his story on the same cheap terms. "This is a bad look out," he wrote. "I much fear I have laid up a bitter store for the future." About January, 1839, we find him inclined to throw up the agreement altogether. He wrote of the "immense profits realized by *Oliver*": the paltry, miserable sum it brought him. He was wasting his energies in a perfect slavery. *Barnaby*, he insisted, must stand over for six months until he was "fresh." "The thought of the net that has been wound round" him drove him to distraction. As the time for beginning *Nickleby* drew on, when he had also bound himself to have *Barnaby* handed over complete by November, it was like a hideous nightmare hanging over him. *Oliver! Barnaby! Nickleby!* "I no sooner get myself up, though I try to attack *Oliver* manfully, than up come the waves of the month's magazine work and drive me back." On February 11, 1839, he appealed for mercy to Bentley, declaring it was impossible to have the book ready and completed. He warmly urged him to let him bring out *Barnaby* in numbers like *Oliver*, and carry it through the magazine month by month.

At last, in June, 1840, "on the overture of Bentley himself," the agreement for *Barnaby* was cancelled, the terms being that Boz should purchase copyright, stock, etc., of *Oliver* for £2250. The dispute was closed by a compromise, by which the third novel was abandoned on certain conditions. Forster says *Oliver* was suspended during recent disputes. Within three months, however, it was completed—within two—that is in January, 1839—the story had been placed towards the end of the magazine, and its place taken at the front by a flourishing new story by the flamboyant Harrison Ainsworth called *Jack Sheppard*, adorned with fine illustrations by Cruikshank. There was to be no more said of *Barnaby Rudge*.

March 1, 1839, was the date of the first number of the *Miscellany* under the new editor, and Boz in a witty and ingenious address introduced his successor. This was entitled "Familiar Epistle from a Parent to his Child," the "maga" being thus personified. He speaks of Ainsworth as "one of his most intimate and valued friends," and then significantly declares "that no property will have to be handed over, for in this respect you have always been literally Bentley's *Miscellany* and never mine." A severe hit it would seem, yet not very clear, for he received a handsome salary. He refers probably to his commission on sales, of which he complained to Forster that he could get no account.

In spite of Forster's severe indictment, and of his case that the publisher was a rapacious being who had entangled a young and brilliant writer in a network of agreements, it must be said that Bentley behaved with great moderation. He seems to have done all he could to suit the author's views. His son George states that he modified the original agreement no less than four times, and each

change was to the advantage of the author. Thus he had secured a contract to supply two novels for £1000; yet finally it was conceded that the writer was to receive £750 for one, and over £4000 for the other. This was simply prudent; for it is the worst policy to hold a writer whose fame is growing to a remuneration which is to be measured by his merit when comparatively obscure, though promising.

PUBLIC DINNERS

This picture, drawn by George Cruikshank, forms one of the illustrations in *Sketches by Boz*. The two figures in the foreground leading the children are portraits of Chapman and Hall, whilst the two at the back are Dickens and Cruikshank.

In the case of the stage the wise manager almost invariably will make a new and more favourable contract. These things were set before Forster by the son, George Bentley, in a temperate letter to *The Times* in December, 1871, but he declared that he could not see their drift. In this letter it is shown that the trouble arose from the ostentatious announcement that *Barnaby Rudge* would follow *Oliver Twist*. A lawyer's letter on the part of Boz declared that the story could not be supplied in this fashion—certainly not for some months.

It might be that this sum of money was really forfeit money paid by Boz in satisfaction for the broken contract. The *Oliver* copyright

scarcely counted, the publisher having made all he was likely to make from the sale of three editions. So he "threw it in." I can fancy, too, that the publisher was growing tired of the perpetual wrangles.

And how did Boz contrive this almost magic emancipation from his bondage? By returning altogether to his earlier friends, Chapman and Hall, with whom he had contracted to bring out the new story *Nickleby*, and who very generously, and also in their own interest, engaged to supply the funds for his release.

Macrone now alarmed him by announcing a reissue of *The Sketches* in parts. This so shocked the author that he determined to stop the project at any cost. He was so bent upon his project that he determined to buy the book back. Two thousand pounds was demanded, and he seemed to have proved to Chapman and Hall that this was no more than his profits warranted. The publishers at last began to think that the operation might be a profitable one if the book was issued under the wing of *Pickwick*, and so the bargain was struck, the Chapmans and Dickens sharing the cost. Forster, still in wrath, seemed to think that a sort of judgment overtook the nefarious Macrone, for he said: "It profited him but little. He died in hardly more than two years." But in spite of his "exorbitant" demand, we find Boz ten years later recalling him as "poor Macrone." Even Forster, when at a long distance from the events, began to take a more charitable view. Macrone's solicitor laid a statement before him. "Macrone," said the gentleman, "was no doubt an adventurer. He was a dreamer of dreams. He died in poverty, and his creditors received nothing, but that was because he had paid away all he had to authors." On which Forster oddly says that Boz was not among the authors so benefited, though he had received £250 from him.

Chapman and Hall, his new allies, will ever be associated with the interesting incident, so pathetically described by Boz, of his purchase of the number of the monthly magazine in which his first article appeared. When Hall came to Furnival's Inn to arrange about *Pickwick*, Boz recalled his face as that of the person who had sold him the copy. One may wonder how a publisher of rank should sell magazines over the counter, but Hall was then only a clerk. "Little Hall" he was usually spoken of. It is a curious feeling, by the way, to hold in your hand Boz's first story, *Mr. Minns and his Cousin*. I have all his contributions to this magazine bound together handsomely. With what a reverence I used to look at their publishing office, 193 Piccadilly; before that it was at 186 Strand; now it is 11 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. The firm are boldly playing their Boz "for all that he is worth." They have issued during the last few years far more editions than were even dreamed of in his own day, and far more than any other novelist's works ever enjoyed. I remember well what an ambitious venture was thought the "Illustrated Library Edition" in green cloth covers: it sufficed for many years. Such a thing as the costly "National Edition" would not have come within his or their ken, nor would it have been possible to issue such a marvellously cheap edition as the "Popular Edition" now in course of publication at 1s. a volume.

(To be continued)

MR. TIBBS'S STORY

By LEICESTER ROMAYNE

AUTHOR OF "THE SURVIVAL OF MRS. CRUPP," "TURVEYDROP AND DEPORTMENT," ETC.

MR. TIBBS cleaned the gentlemen's boots, gave a periodical brilliance to the drawing-room windows, and performed many other useful, though humble, duties at the house with the bright brass door-plate, new spring-roller blinds, and other distinctive adornments in Great Coram Street, Somers Town. Think not, however, that it had always been thus with Mr. Tibbs. He had once moved in a wider sphere of action, had known greater things, and, alas! had outlived them! Once, gentlemen, ah! once, when he was in the volunteer corps in eighteen hundred and six! . . . You know the story?

I like, nay, I love a man who has at least one tale to tell about himself and his younger days. He may be a poor-spirited, insignificant creature like Mr. Tibbs; he may be one of those born to be snubbed, scorned, patronized, and overridden in a world where each jostles his neighbour and the weakest go to the wall; but there, sirs, wrapped up in the foolish-seeming narrative, is something the man holds dear, something of his one-time self that he still cherishes, some one or two of youth's illusions that he preserves still unshattered that give him a claim to our sympathy and respect and ask our patient hearing to the end. Once, gentlemen, once, in the year eighteen hundred and six! . . . What a world it was for all of us, then!

Mrs. Tibbs disliked long stories, and cherished no illusions. Why, indeed, should she look back on to past days, she, Mrs. Tibbs, with her spick-and-span house, her spring-roller blinds, her glittering stair-wires, her blue and gold curtains, her bell-lamps and fan-lights and the rest? Had the past brought her these things? No, no, it was the present Mrs. Tibbs had to think of, *must* think of, and indeed to do her no more than justice, *did* think of. "Tell your master, James," the good lady interposed, when the volunteer story really seemed to be making fair way, "tell your master, James, if he *won't* carve the fowls to send them to me!"

Mr. Tibbs, however, was differently situated. He did not feel any ecstatic proprietary joy in the stair-wires and spring-roller blinds, and he had perhaps a dim perception that for a man who had once been a member of that volunteer corps he ought now to be doing something better than polishing the footwear of his wife's lodgers. Alas! but Mr. Tibbs was not of that tough quality that makes for worldly success. He was weak and good-natured and unassertive. And yet . . . and yet . . . something makes me think that plain little Mr. Tibbs with all his shortcomings was still the worthiest of all that company, more attractive, sirs, than the genteel Miss Maplesones with their blue-ribboned guitars, more admirable than the Byron-quoting Mr. Septimus Hicks in his most poetical moments, more estimable than the aristocratic Mr. Wisbottle with all his extensive knowledge of the peerage, more excellent than the æsthetic Mr. Tomkins with all his keen appreciation of the beauties of the broken chimney-pot at No. 48.

When Mr. Tibbs was told by his autocratic partner not to lean his head against the wall nor put his feet on the steel fender, be sure he

bethought him of the old volunteer days when martial ardour fired his breast and he stepped out bravely with his comrades. When, having taken the last remnant of fish, he was deprived of his knife by superior orders and doomed to "chase small particles of salmon round and round his plate with a piece of bread and a fork," doubt not that the gallant Tibbs heard the voice of his old commander, Sir Charles Rampart, calling him from the ranks and across the years, "Tibbs, he says, says he, Tibbs—Tibbs!" And a smile of pride would then light up his features, and his shrewish wife and the foolish chatter around him and the dull monotony of his days would be blotted out and forgotten in the glad and inspiring remembrance of those vanished glories.

Fain indeed were I to seek out that modest little man, where now he haply passes his more than centenarian days, and there in some snug Walworth retreat would I win from him over a friendly pipe the true and authentic history of that volunteer corps in all its perfect beauty. There, with no termagant spouse to check his quiet eloquence, no superior Wisbottle to congeal with frosty disdain the warm, genial flow of his narrative, the happy Tibbs should pour out to sympathetic and attentive ears all his story. The plan of that antique parade-ground should be fairly drawn and every angle of it be a corner of debate and friendly discussion; for there perchance was learnt the goose-step that was to frighten the *Colossus* from the fields of Europe! Must a detail, then, be forgotten, or the history, prowess, fighting strength, and uniform of that redoubtable corps go unmarked and unrecorded? Nay, sirs, nay, not thus unfruitful should be our meeting; nor would I take my leave that night ere I had learnt all that might be known of the personal appearance, qualities, characteristics, military reputation, and genealogical tree of that gallant and distinguished officer in command, Sir Charles Rampart yclept. Are you shy, sirs, of old men's tales, and would you flee from Mr. Tibbs as from one teasingly reminiscent? Nay, nay, but from the old men's tales has our history come down to us, and all the gallant deeds of our forbears of yore. Be not impatient then, you young folk, of the rambling talk of those of the older race, for they are looking back upon their own shining days—they, who have now done with all the wild sport and fun and the pretty love-making! Be not impatient, I say, of Tibbs and his story, for you, even you, who have not yet reached life's meridian, can look back, haply, across a little space, to happy table gatherings where was one dear, honoured face crowning all that now is not! How oft those lips shaped the merry anecdote and the well-remembered tale, winning gay mirth and some pert protest from fresh young lips that vowed they had been told it all before! But now over the altered years the story comes with a changèd meaning, and with a cry through its thin-worn laughter!

"Do you see?" said the connoisseur, ". . . do you see how splendidly the light falls upon the left side of that broken chimney-pot?"

I know not indeed if Mr. Wisbottle saw it, but assuredly little Mr. Tibbs would have praised it had they called him up with a smudged face from below stairs. It would remind him of how once when he was in the volunteer corps in eighteen hundred and six—ah, well! how splendidly the light did fall then to be sure, behind the broken chimney-pots!

"LITTLE DORRIT"

By W. A. FRASER
AUTHOR OF "THE ILLUSTRATORS OF DICKENS"

OUT of the long list of the novels of Dickens, *Little Dorrit* is sometimes treated with the most unmerited neglect. It is held by many to be tedious, and unlike Dickens in its prevalent air of gloom. As a narrative it is far from successful: it is cumbered with mysteries which prove futile, and has no proportion in its contrasting parts. In this book Dickens has little of his wonted buoyancy throughout, it is in a graver key. We often hear accordingly that nothing good can be said of *Little Dorrit*. Whereas a competent judge, taking up the book as he would any other, will find in it some of the best work Dickens ever did: pictures so wholly admirable, so marvellously observed, and so exquisitely presented, that he is tempted to call *Little Dorrit* the best book of all.

A STUDY FOR MR. DORRIT
From a pencil sketch by "Phiz." By permission of Mr. Walter T. Spencer

Little Dorrit is strong in pathos as in humour. Should ever proof be demanded—as it often has been—that Dickens is capable of high comedy, let it be sought in the thirty-first chapter of Book I. There will be seen the old Marshalsea prisoner, the bankrupt of half a lifetime, entertaining and patronizing his workhouse pensioner, old Mr. Nandy. For delicacy of treatment, for fineness of observation, this scene is unequalled in all his novels. Of exaggeration there is not a trace; nothing raises a laugh; at most one smiles, and may very likely be kept grave by profound interest and a certain emotion of wonder. We are in a debtors' prison among vulgar folk; yet the exquisite finish of this study of human nature forbids one to judge it by any but the highest standards. The Dorrit brothers are both well

drawn; and in this scene we have the culmination of the author's genius. That it reveals itself so quietly is but the final assurance of consummate power. In the whole range of fiction there is no scene so vivid as this; exhibited so briefly yet so completely, with such rightness in every touch, such impressiveness of total effect, that the thing becomes a miracle.

Dickens's memories of childhood made his hand very sure whenever he dealt with the squalid prison-world, and life there was no less fertile in pathos than death. Very often it is inextricably blended with humour—an instance of which has just been given. In the details of the Marshalsea picture, who shall say which element prevails? Yet, comparing it with the corresponding scenes in *Pickwick*, we perceive a subdual of tone, which comes not only of advancing years, but of riper art; and as we watch the Dorrit family step forth from the prison door, it is in another mood than that which accompanied the release of Mr. Pickwick.

Among the minor group of characters in *Little Dorrit* is Mr. Casby, the venerable grandsire with the snowy locks and childlike visage; the Patriarch, as he is called, who walks in a light of contemplative benevolence. Mr. Casby is a humbug of a peculiarly dangerous kind; under various disguises he is constantly to be met with in the England of to-day. This sweetly philosophic being owns houses, and those of the kind we now call slums. Of course he knows nothing about their evil condition; of course he employs an agent to collect his rents, and is naturally surprised when this agent falls short in the expected receipts. It pains him that human nature should be so dishonest, for the sake of his tenants themselves it behoves him to insist on full and regular payment. When, in the end, Mr. Casby has his impressive locks ruthlessly shorn by the agent risen in revolt against such a mass of lies and cruelty and unclean selfishness, we feel that the punishment is inadequate. Mr. Casby nowadays does not take the trouble to assume a sweet or reverent aspect: if he lives in the neighbourhood of his property, he is frankly a brute; if, as is so often the case, he resides in a very different part of the town, his associates are persons who would smile indeed at any affectation of sanctity. Mr. Casby is anything but a caricature, but he is a most offensive humbug.

Of the Barnacle family we accept readily enough the one who is described as being bright and young; indeed, this youngster is a good deal of a gentleman, and represents the surviving element in our present-day civil service; under a competitive system he alone would have a chance. His relatives have significance enough, but very little life. Dickens wrote of them in anger, which was never the case in his satiric masterpieces.

What shall we say of Flora Finching? We are told that the picture is from life. I am disposed to credit Flora Finching with mental power superior to Mrs. Nickleby's; the preference may provoke a charge of subtlety, but I adhere to it after a long acquaintance with both ladies. Indeed, one rather likes Flora. Of course she has killed her husband; but one chooses to forget that. Flora, to tell the truth, has some imagination, a touch of poetry; in her heart she is convinced that as Mrs. Clennam she would have been a happier woman. Yet she has

sense enough and fantasy enough only to play with the thought; a little lacking in delicacy, she causes her old lover some embarrassment, but never seriously hopes to win him back. When Arthur Clennam marries Little Dorrit she behaves admirably. She is a kind soul, and doubtless became a very pleasant, even useful, friend to little Mrs. Clennam.

Little Dorrit has her love story, and at one moment it is well told; the chapter describing her travel in Italy deserves high praise. But, on the whole, Little Dorrit is not a success in characterization.

Mrs. Clennam, Arthur's mother, is wrought so patiently and placed in so picturesque a scene that one laments over her impossibility; her so-called talk is, perhaps, less readable than anything in Dickens. The story shows us, or aims at showing us, Miss Wade and Tattycoram, from both of whom we turn incredulous. Women these only in name, a source of scoffing to the enemies of the master and of sorrow to his friends.

In the London of to-day there is a very familiar female type known as the shop girl. Dickens did not see much of her, but he has drawn her portrait with unerring hand in Fanny Dorrit. Her first characteristic is a paltry and ignorant ambition, of course allied with vanity; she is crudely selfish, and has only the elementary scruples of her sex. Withal there are glimmers in her, under favourable circumstances, a vulgar good nature; if she has much to spare she will bestow it upon those she likes, and at all times she prefers to see cheerfulness around her. Miss Dorrit, we know, had an unhappy training; but not worse in degree, though different in kind from that of her modern parallel.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XXVIII

A FRIENDLY EPISTLE FROM ALDOBRANDENSIS

CHARLEY DICKENS, be not too bold,
Your Daily News is very old,
And will not prove a mine of gold.

How could you, Charley, lend your name
To such a vulgar, losing game,
The winding-sheet of all your fame?

Charley, my friend, retreat by times,
Attend to my prophetic rhymes:
He hazards much who wayward climbs—

From height to height the Alpine steep,
The eagle's nest, the giant's leap;
Slow and sure's the way to creep.

Stick to your novels, tales, and chimes,
Or seek Italia's sunny climes,
Not think to supersede the Times.

From *Mephystopheles*, 24 *January*, 1846.

THE SPEECHES OF CHARLES DICKENS

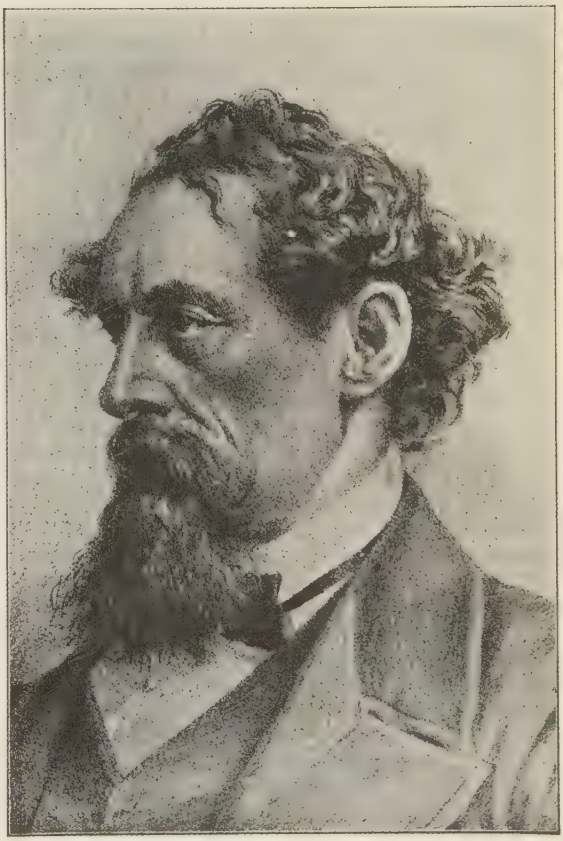
By "OLD FLEET"

A POPULAR subject for discussion at gatherings of Dickensians is "My Favourite Book," and on such occasions one has heard every one of the novels pleaded for—from *David Copperfield* to *Hard Times*. But I have never heard of any one selecting for advocacy as his favourite book *The Speeches of Charles Dickens*, and it is a fact at which I have often wondered. Dickens's novels are a never-failing source of delight to all who understand their spirit; but, after all, it is surely uncontrovertible that biography is the most fascinating form of literature. It is true that Dickens's books strike directly at the heart as few writers' books have done, and they seem to be a natural stepping-stone to his intimate personal friendship; but, even so, it is a fact that the most popular of their number is the one that is largely autobiographical.

And however much a man's books may seem to reveal his heart, it is always good to turn to the records of his life and doings, and learn that those books have the added charm of sincerity. In the case of Dickens, a perusal of his *Letters* and *Speeches*—apart altogether from the testimony of his friends—has this effect. I have been re-reading recently the *Speeches* as collected and edited by Richard Herne Shepherd, and now republished in a fine-paper edition by Messrs. Chatto and Windus, and I have been struck by the fact that here, stripped of the veil of fiction, we have the utterances of one who assuredly could have desired no better epitaph than to be written of as "one who loved his fellow-men." At the recent dinner in Manchester, Mr. Percy Fitzgerald spoke of Dickens's marvellous versatility. As a novelist he was the most popular of his time, as an actor he would have shone in any company, as a public reader he has never been rivalled, and as a speaker he had few peers. It has often been a cause for surprise with me that of the many Dickensians I have met who have known the novels almost by heart, comparatively few have ever read this little volume of speeches. Yet it contains some of the best and noblest passages to be found among all the printed productions of his genius.

To his remarkable gifts as a speaker many who knew and heard him have borne testimony, but no testimony could be more eloquent and convincing than this little collection of addresses delivered between 1841 and 1870. The happy knack of being able to say the right word at the right moment, and to say it with a simple eloquence that even in cold type does not fail to move, is evident throughout. One who heard his tribute to the memory of Daniel Maclise at a Royal Academy banquet has recorded how, when Dickens had ended, "death-like stillness came over the great room. . . . The speech had such an effect upon the whole company that, by common consent, immediately it was ended all rose from their seats, and no other speech was heard that evening." "Dickens had said all that needed to be said, as well as it possibly could be said," she adds, and this is exactly the feeling that one has as one reads almost every one of these speeches. There are no grandiose flights of eloquence, none of that striving after effect which is alleged against many of his writings, but

just plain appeals straight from the heart. Is there anything in all his writings, for instance, to excel the closing lines of his speech in 1858 on behalf of the Children's Hospital? "The dream-children whom I would now raise, if I could, before every one of you, according to your various circumstances, should be the dear child you love, the dearer child you have lost, the child you might have had, the child you certainly have been. Each of these dream-children should hold in its powerful hand one of the little children now lying in the Child's Hospital, or now shut out of it to perish. Each of these dream-children should say to you, 'O, help this little suppliant in my name; O, help it for my sake!'"



CHARLES DICKENS

From an engraving of a photograph by Gurney. By permission of Messrs. Chatto and Windus

In a speech at Edinburgh he said, "I feel as if I stood amongst old friends whom I had intimately known and highly valued. I feel as if the deaths of the fictitious creatures, in which you have been kind enough to express an interest, had endeared us to each other as real afflictions deepen friendships in actual life." This is what he himself felt in 1841, and this is what millions have felt since, and feel to-day. And if the death of that angel child Nell, or of that poor overwrought little creature Paul, or of the tender little blossom Dora, has the effect of drawing us nearer to their creator, and inspiring in us a desire to know the man himself, let us first listen to his voice addressing us each and all personally in this volume of *Speeches*, and then let his most inti-

mate friend show us the man as he was. There can be no better introduction to the man than these speeches, which constitute one of the most fascinating volumes of Dickens literature.

This new edition is in every way worthy of praise. It is printed on excellent paper, in good type, and well and handsomely bound. It also has a portrait frontispiece, which, through the courtesy of the publishers, we are able to reproduce. The volume is published at the moderate price of two shillings.

DICKENS AND THE TRAINING OF THE CHILD

By the REV. S. G. CHAMBERS (of Toronto)

WHEN a great genius arises he makes his place in the world and explains himself. Criticism does not make him or unmake him. He makes or unmakes himself, according to the lasting impression he creates for good or evil upon mankind generally. In the case of a real genius, critics may apparently nibble him all away; but when they get through, he remains very much the same force as he was originally. When the impression made is deep the critics retire, and it is only when it begins to fade that they begin to come back again to analyse, attack, and cut away.

In the case of Charles Dickens, when we consider his influence for good, we must judge him not so much by the analytical results of his works, not by any very deep study of his style, in order to find out his defects, but by what he created and what he brought into the world. Most reformers and philanthropists have by their efforts shown themselves to be more or less fanatics, imbued with the one thought, and allowing themselves to be dominated by that one idea; in the case of Charles Dickens we cannot reasonably say this. His knowledge of mankind was wide; his treatment of their wrongs was most comprehensive; and it was not in one particular only that he used his influence, his person, and his pen, to bring about an amelioration and reformation of the existing state of affairs. His influence was of the quiet, yet none the less powerful kind, and the results in the bettering of the people among whom he lived and of whom he had most intimate knowledge—whether these results came directly or indirectly—show that his influence was an influence of the right kind; the influence of one whose efforts will be felt and remembered for all time to come.

When we read his tales we find in them an irresistible humour, not clownish, but fun innocent and pure; something which has a most moral effect upon his readers, for with him they have laughed heartily and genuinely, and through smiles and tears have seen the seriousness and solemnity of things which he intended to lay bare. It is noticeable that although he carried his fun and humour into the lowest of scenes and conditions, they were never once sullied by any hint of impurity or possibility of harm.

His stories have thus gone to the very heart of humanity; he not only amused, he cheered, he warmed humanity, such an apostle was he of kindness and brotherly love, of sympathy for the poor, and of charity which is not condescension. He has not only pleased in a genuine and pure way, he has softened the hearts of a generation and will soften

others. He made true charity fashionable, and has awakened pity in the hearts of millions of people. He has helped to make our Christmas what it is—marked by acts of kindness and helpfulness to the poor; and every barefooted boy and girl in the streets of England and America to-day fares a little better and gets fewer cuffs and buffetings and more pudding because Charles Dickens wrote; and the world as a whole is more cheerful and more sympathetic because of his loving and lovable presence in it.

In the one great particular of education, we see how far-reaching his efforts were. The educational system of his day was one of his chief butts. He has shown it more than any other writer, and a great reformation has been the result. You may see, then, how in this way too he was a moral reformer, for true reformation in matters educational always has in view a reformation in morals, and his influence was morally as well as educationally felt. Charles Dickens has been called the greatest educational reformer that England has produced. This has sometimes been challenged, but I believe the challenge has always been successfully met and combated, and perhaps on this account he did not come forward with any new educational ideas and theories, asking that they should be tried and tested, but exposed the educational system of his day, as it existed in particular kinds of schools of which the world knew little; he showed up the defects of the methods in vogue, and all done in such a pictorial and life-like manner that the reformation came without the laying down of new principles, hard and severe, or the spreading broadcast of treatises and textbooks. In his own way Charles Dickens stands forth and stands apart as one of the greatest educational reformers of the nineteenth century.

Dickens was the first great English student of the kindergarten. He was a disciple of Froebel, the German reformer, one of the greatest champions of kindergartens and their work. Froebel had spiritual aims—he revealed the true philosophy, Dickens gave it wings; Froebel gave the thought, Dickens made the thought clear and strong by arousing feelings in sympathy and harmony with it. Dickens pointed out very clearly that there was really more in a child than one could put into him, and that the doctrine of child depravity was a totally erroneous one. The child he made out was no longer a thing to be repressed, but a being to be developed. He promulgated the doctrine and philosophy that there was a possibility of good in every one, no matter how far gone in evil.

Again, Dickens attacked the cramming system as practised in his day. Dr. Blimber's school, in *Dombey and Son*, is a strong and profound criticism upon the system. This is unquestionably the greatest book ever written as an exposure of the evils of cramming.

The need of sympathy with childhood has never been revealed so vividly as by Dickens. He shows this most strongly by the cruelty, coercion, and hardness of such characters as Squeers, Bumble, Creakle, and Mrs. Pipchin. The overthrow of coercion in certain kinds of schools is one of the great results that justify us in classing Dickens with other great educational reformers. The picture of low cunning, avarice, ignorance, and brutality in Squeers astounded his readers, and led to the closing of most of the schools, particularly in Yorkshire,

where such totally unfit schoolmasters taught, or attempted to teach; and also to the overthrow of tyranny in schools throughout the civilized world. Dickens was always a profound student of children, and he continually touched upon free childhood, the individuality, the imagination of children. He exposed the ignorance of those who resent the suggestion that children need to be studied. Dickens was also the great apostle of neglected children, and by his exposure of the internal workings of unions and so-called charitable institutions for poor children, he tore away the curtain which had hid these things from the world, laid them bare, and started on foot the efforts for their reformation and the amelioration of the children's lot.

In these and in many other ways Dickens will stand forth as one of the greatest who have influenced the world for good, not only in his own England and in his own day, but since, by the reading and study of his works. His chief aim was to lay bare the injustice, the blighting coercion practised on helpless children, by sordid, ignorant, brutal men called schoolmasters, by authorities of institutions, and in a less degree by some parents of his time. It was a noble work, and well done.

It is frequently asserted that Dickens portrayed wrong training more than right, that he was destructive rather than constructive. In a sense this is correct. But as I have said, he did not set out to formulate a new theory so much as he endeavoured to startle mankind into a realization of existing conditions, to create a feeling of contempt and dislike for them, and so lay the only sure foundation for a reform in such things; thus his personal influence and the influence of his pen could have been productive of nothing but good. And we may add that in all his wonderful pictures it would have been impossible for him to have so vividly described the wrong (and he has done it without exaggeration) if he had not clearly understood what was right and good.

TOM PINCH AND MARY

By FRANK SPEAIGHT

A SWEET child climbs upon my knee;
'Tis hers:
Not mine; such joys were not to be,
But tears.
Those tears have long since stayed their course,
For joy has long since dried their source.
I have no sorrow or remorse
For those past days.

She lives with him she loved so well:
Why should I grieve?
She dreamt not how my heart did swell:
Why should I grieve?
My love is pure as mountain stream,
As bright and clear as morning's beam;
To me an angel she doth seem:
Why should I grieve?

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

THE "old folks' tea" will be held on Saturday, 13 April, at St. John's Parish Hall, Vartry Road, Stamford Hill North. "Edmonton" or "Seven Sisters Corner" trams from Finsbury Park "Tube" Station pass the end of Vartry Road. Will all members willing to assist in carving, serving, or entertaining with songs, recitations, etc., kindly be at the hall as early as possible after 3 p.m., as there will be much to prepare that all may be ready for the guests at 5 p.m.? Will gentlemen please bring their own carvers?

Needlework and Charitable Guild.

We would remind our members that this will be the last notice before the "dance social" on Thursday, 25 April, at St. Bride's Institute, and once more ask them to assist us in making this function a great success. Tickets are at head-quarters, to include refreshments: Members, 2s.; non-members, 2s. 6d.

AT the birthday celebration on 7 February Mr. Cuming Walters gave a lecture on "Charles Dickens and John Bull," which we hope to print in our next number; and on 1 March a very interesting paper was contributed by Mr. William Farrow on *Our Mutual Friend*, followed by a discussion. Mr. A. Capel Shaw occupied the chair. Mr. Farrow dealt with the characters in the book in an appreciative and humorous manner. He referred to the time when Dickens wrote *Our Mutual Friend*, and pointed out that, although the author was passing through one of the saddest years of his life—he had lost by death a favourite son and two dear and intimate friends, and miraculously escaped death in a terrible railway accident—yet the book was classed among his best works. Among those taking part in the discussion were Mr. Tidmarsh, Mr. Davis, Mr. Porter, Mr. Timings, Mr. Bosworth, and Mr. Yoxall.

Birmingham.

THE monthly meeting was held on 13 March at the Literary and Philosophic Club, when Mr. C. Andrews read a most interesting and instructive paper on "The Social Influence of Charles Dickens." After the paper, which was closely followed and keenly appreciated by a large company of members, a discussion took place, in which the following participated: Mrs. A. J. Tonkin, and Messrs. J. Ames Baker, F.R.G.S., E. W. Down, H. Horne, S. Tucker, C. Davey, A. J. Tonkin, and H. Theo. Jones.

Bristol and Clifton.

AN enjoyable social gathering was held at the usual place of meeting on 25 February in the form of a whist drive, when some fourteen tables were occupied by members of the Fellowship. The successful folk at the close of the play were Mrs. Needs, Mrs. Hounslow, Miss L. M. May, and Mr. Butfield. The prizes were four handsomely bound volumes of the Fireside Edition of the Works of Dickens. On Tuesday, 26 February, an entertainment was given by some members of the Branch in connexion with the Literary Society associated with George Street Congregational Church, Croydon. The Rev. Baldwin Brindley presided. Mr. Sidney Marriott gave a short introductory lecture on the career, character, and genius of Dickens, which was followed by four recitals, viz.: "The Experiences of Harold Skimpole," by Mr. Douglas; "The Execution of Sydney Carton," by Mrs. A. Hoare; "The Funeral of Little Nell," by Mr. R. Allbut; and in conclusion, "The Friendly Waiter at Yarmouth," rendered by Mrs. Arthur Hoare in easy and charming style. On 11 March, in the ladies' parlour, Brixton Independent Church, Mr. R. Allbut occupied the chair. The programme, arranged by Mrs. Stuart and Miss E. Cooper, comprised songs and recitations, the former by Miss Stevens, Miss Marjorie Coade, Miss A. Cooper, Mr. Ewing, and Mr. Thompson; also two pianoforte solos were given in brilliant form by Mr. A. Denton. Three admirable

Brixton.

recitals were interspersed and commanded unanimous appreciation, "The Baron of Grogzwig," by Miss Norah Lickis; "Serjeant Buzfuz for the Plaintiff," and "The Liver Wing Testimonial," by Mr. Wolsey.

Chester. THE birthday celebration of the Branch took the form of a dinner at the Hotel Imperial on 7 February. The President, the Rev. W. H. Towle (U.S.A), who is shortly leaving the city, had many references made to his interest in the Fellowship during the evening. After dinner the following programme was presented: "Dickens," John McLellan; a song, Miss Alice Schofield; "Parent Fellowship," Miss Mary C. O'Neill; the 'cello, Wm. Wooley; "The Dickens Bachelors," Dr. Aelyas Kassab; "The Chester Fellowship," Rev. W. H. Towle; reading, Miss Eva Clayton; "The Ladies," Lawrence Riley; "American Notes," Dr. Wadea Kassab; "The Men," S. Price Stevenson; farewell remarks, J. E. McDonough. Mr. Frank Speaight, of London, has been spending several days with Miss O'Neill, the Hon. Secretary of the Branch, and has had an opportunity of making friends with many of its members.

Gloucester. AT the February meeting readings from *Pickwick* were given by Messrs. Edwards and Jenkins, followed by an interesting discussion. Mr. H. W. Bruton, who presided, suggested that the summer picnic should take place at Berkeley Castle. The party could then arrange a drive to Berkeley Heath (immortalized in *Pickwick*) and have tea in the famous hostelry. The Branch now numbers eighty members.

Gravesend and Northfleet. THE first annual meeting of the Branch was held at the Masonic Hall on 20 February. The Hon. Secretary presented reports of the work of the past year, which showed there were ninety-one members, and that eight meetings had been held, including the Pickwickian evening at the "Leather Bottle," Cobham, in June. Reference was made to the death of Mrs. Feaver Clarke, one of the founders of the Society and a member of the first Committee. The report was adopted, and the following officials were elected for the ensuing year: President, Mr. G. M. Arnold, J.P. (Mayor of Gravesend); Vice-Presidents, Mr. J. C. Huntley, J.P., Mr. W. Barlow, and Mr. A. G. Hambrook; Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. Horatio A. Waldegrave; Committee, Miss E. Barlow, Miss King, Miss M. Beamish, Messrs. Beagley, W. E. Thomas, A. J. Philip; Hon. Auditors, Messrs. D. J. Williams and Councillor F. Goldsmith. The business meeting was followed by a whist drive and dance, in which one hundred and twenty members and friends participated.

Hastings and St. Leonards. TO assist the funds of the Children's Holiday Home, West Hill, St. Leonards, the fourth annual children's entertainment was given on 12 February. Two performances took place (afternoon and evening) at the Queen's Hotel, and both met with a great deal of success, the Assembly Room being quite full in the evening. An admirable programme had been arranged and was carried out on both occasions without a hitch, and a galaxy of the best juvenile talent was presented in giving living tableaux from Dickens's works. The whole undertaking was very encouraging in result, and doubtless a substantial sum of money will be handed over to the Children's Holiday Home as the outcome of the entertainment.

Hull. THE birthday celebration took the form of an entertainment, and a goodly gathering fully enjoyed the programme submitted, which included tableaux vivants, recitals in costume, recitations, and vocal and instrumental music. The ladies and gentlemen who took part were Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson, Professor Bolton, Mr. and Mrs. Ellison, Miss J. Ellison, Miss Firbank, Mr. and Mrs. G. Graves, Mr. H. Johnson, Miss Rumfitt, and Miss Gertrude Watson, L.R.A.M. The tableaux vivants were especially well done, various popular characters from Dickens being portrayed with great success, despite the limited area of the stage. The members met for their second meeting of the month in Percy Street, the

subject being *Great Expectations*. Miss A. Hall gave a most interesting résumé of the book, bringing out in a forcible manner the chief characteristics of the people who figure in the novel. A discussion followed the paper, in which Messrs. Noble and Waterfall, Miss E. Watson, Miss Weatherill, and Mrs. Holdsworth took part. It was decided to devote the money raised for the Dickens Birthday Fund to that portion of the Dispensary which administers to the necessities of the poor, in addition to medical treatment.

Liverpool. A DELIGHTFUL gathering took place at the Common Hall, Hackins Hey, on 27 February. There was a good muster of members and friends, and the proceedings consisted of a "social," in which pleasant chat was agreeably interspersed with Dickensian recitations, charmingly rendered by Miss Statham, and some exceedingly clever and effective character sketches in costume by Mr. Percy Jaggard. Mr. J. Marriott presided, and also contributed a humorous recitation. The whole of the arrangements were most efficiently carried out by Mrs. Bell, the indefatigable Treasurer of the Fellowship, assisted by members of the Council and other friends. A well-attended meeting was held on 13 March. The President, Mr. E. A. Browne, F.R.C.S., occupied the chair, and the business consisted of an extremely interesting and humorous lecture, entitled "Fairy Stories from Various Lands," by Mr. John Lee, B.A.

Manchester. AT the March meeting, Mr. J. D. Chew presiding, Miss Gertrude Thompson read a paper on *Little Dorrit*, and Mr. F. W. Thompson one on "Humbugs and Saints," based on characters in the same novel. Mr. W. H. Vaughan gave a reading, "Going into Society," and Miss Marian Kinnell recited "Copperfield and the Waiter." After the election of officers at the April meeting there is to be a Dickens debate.

Melbourne. THE Dickens birthday demonstration was celebrated on 4 February, the usual monthly night of meeting, and was a splendid success. The President, Rev. E. Rorke, B.A., presided. The occasion was also the anniversary of the birth of the popular Programme Secretary, Mr. W. A. Windas. In connexion with the entertainment recently given on behalf of the Victorian Braille Writers' Association, the proceeds of which exceeded £10, the Fellowship was entitled to nominate a life governor of that association, and the choice unanimously fell upon Mr. J. H. Crowther, the promoter and Hon. Secretary of the Melbourne Branch. The membership since the annual meeting in September last has steadily increased, and now stands at two hundred and two. The President delivered an address on "Child Life in Dickens's Time," and Mr. Du Soir, V.P., spoke on Dickens compared with contemporary and later day writers. Mr. Crowther read a paper on "Dickens as a Public Reader." Miss Josephine Samuell recited "Great Porter Square," and musical and other items were contributed by Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Masters, Miss Green, and Miss Bramley.

Sheffield. THE recently formed Dramatic Society in connexion with this Branch gave a performance on 22 February at the Cutlers' Hall of *The Cricket on the Hearth*, adapted by Edward Stirling. It was an intelligent representation, and no one failed in the rendering of their part. Mr. Howard Williams played Peerybingle; Mr. T. H. Warskett, Caleb Plummer; Mr. S. D. Gent, Tackleton; Mr. A. Waite, The Stranger; Miss Roberts, Bertha Plummer; Mrs. T. H. Warskett, Dot; Miss Lydia Lucas, Tilly Slowboy; and Miss Mabel Smith, May Fielding. We understand that the whole of the arrangements were carried out by Mrs. Warskett and Mr. J. E. B. Beaumont, to whom the success of the piece is mainly due. The staging was adequate, there being an indication of experienced supervision in the setting of the scenes. The scenery and effects were lent

by the directors of the Lyceum and Royal Theatres. A bouquet was presented to Mrs. Warskett at the close of the performance.

Toronto.

NEARLY two hundred members of the Toronto Branch assembled at McConkey's on 7 February to celebrate the ninety-fifth anniversary of the novelist's birth. It was a most enthusiastic gathering of Dickens lovers, and the dinner and programme proved very enjoyable. The menu cards were tastefully produced, with appropriate quotations from Dickens. The Chairman, Mr. E. S. Williamson, in his opening remarks, referred to the birth of Dickens at Portsea on 7 February, 1812, and what his coming into the world had meant to English literature and life. He quoted the prophecy of Mr. Geo. K. Chesterton, the English essayist, to the effect that in the course of time "Dickens would dominate the whole England of the nineteenth century." Mr. Williamson also congratulated the Branch upon the fact that it is now the third largest in the world, with a present membership of over three hundred, and that everything so far undertaken, whether in the line of entertainment or charitable work, has been successful. Those taking part in the programme were: Alderman J. W. Bengough, who read an original poem; Miss Emma T. Irons, recitation from *The Old Curiosity Shop;* Miss Jean Blewett, an original reading; Mr. F. M. Bell-Smith, selection from *A Christmas Carol;* two solos by Miss Mae Dickenson.

West London.

ON 28 February in the Lecture Hall, Municipal Buildings, Ealing, Miss Brinckman read a paper on "Dickens, His Life and Works," by Mr. Matz, which was much enjoyed. Mr. Jacobs read with great dramatic force "The Madman's Story" from *Pickwick.* In her usual graceful manner Miss Eilian Hughes read "The Italian Prisoner" from *The Uncommercial Traveller.* Miss Watson charmingly recited "Boots at the Holly Tree Inn." Mr. Harwood read from *Great Expectations* "How Pip was Apprenticed to Joe Gargery," which caused amusement. Miss Brinckman also admirably rendered the "Muffin and Crumpet" speech from *Nicholas Nickleby.* Mr. Watson was in the chair.

MR. PERCY MERRIMAN'S DICKENS RECITAL

ON Tuesday, 12 March, Mr. Percy Merriman, an enthusiastic member of the Fellowship, gave his first Dickens recital at the Haverstock Sunday School before a crowded and appreciative audience. The programme opened with the evergreen "Boots at the Holly Tree Inn," which was well received, but Mr. Merriman was heard to better advantage in three character sketches, namely, Sydney Carton, Fagin, and Dick Swiveller. His interpretation of the scene between the "merry old gentleman" and Oliver was particularly striking, and was undoubtedly one of the successes of the evening. As Mr. Merriman pointed out, it would be unnatural to present Dick Swiveller without the Marchioness, and accordingly he was assisted by Miss Amy Gwinnett, who was well suited as the small servant. Mr. Merriman then gave a reading of "The Death of Little Paul," which was not so successful as his previous efforts. The second half of the programme consisted, amongst others, of a selection from *Dombey and Son* entitled "Bunsby marries Mrs. McStinger" (surely "Mrs. McStinger marries Bunsby" would have been more to the point!), which was loudly applauded, Mr. Merriman's facial play being strikingly exhibited. This was followed by three more character

sketches, of which Mr. Toots was the general favourite. The programme was brought to a close with a lively rendering of the "Cratchits' Christmas Dinner."

Altogether it was a most enjoyable evening, and Mr. Merriman is to be warmly congratulated on his first Dickens recital, which, it is to be trusted, will not be his last. C. A. L.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"I didn't know, and now I do know, and that shows the advantage of asking, don't it?"—ROSA DARTLE.

ANSWERS

TIGERS IN AFRICA.—The reference appears in "The Long Voyage" in *Reprinted Pieces.* CHAS. G. PRICE.

EDWIN DROOD.—Sir Luke Fildes kindly informed me, nearly three years ago, that he had never written any paper on Edwin Drood. Very probably the footnote which your querist names has reference to an article by Alice Meynell in the *Century Magazine* for February, 1884. The date, a month prior to that of the *Cornhill* contribution, lends support to a theory already strengthened by the admitted fact that Mrs. Meynell's paper was largely inspired by Dickens's last illustrator. GEORGE F. GADD.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

APRIL

3. Powerstock Branch: Dance.
3. Hastings Branch: Annual Social at Queen's Hotel at 7.30.
4. Edinburgh Branch: Lecture by Rev. J. Adamson, at 5 St. Andrew's Square.
   Leeds Branch: Fortnightly Meeting, at Church Institute, at 8.
5. Manchester Branch: Annual Meeting, at Portico Library, at 7.30.
   Hull Branch: "Some Impressions from *David Copperfield*," by Mr. T. R. Broadbent, at Albion Rooms, at 8.
   West London Branch: Social Evening at Lecture Hall, Ealing.
8. Brixton Branch: Miss Kathleen Marriott's Evening at Brixton Independent Church, at 8.
9. Reading: Lantern Lecture, "Places and Scenes in Dickens's Life and Works," by Mr. B. W. Matz, at Literary and Philosophical Society, at 8.
10. Liverpool Branch: Annual Meeting Bristol and Clifton Dickens Society: Conversazione.
11. Forest Gate Branch: Annual Social, at Earlham Hall, at 8.
12. Winnipeg Branch: Discussion, *A Tale of Two Cities.*
    Shrewsbury Branch: Fortnightly Meeting, at Alkmund's Rooms, at 8.
    Birmingham Branch: Annual Meeting.
15. Southampton Branch: Monthly Meeting, at Kell Memorial Hall, at 8.
18. Edinburgh Branch: Conversazione at 5 St. Andrew's Square, at 8.
    Leeds Branch: Fortnightly Meeting, at Church Institute, at 8.
    Blackheath Branch: Annual Conversazione, at Lewisham Parish Hall.
19. Hull Branch: *Bleak House*, by Mr. S. Harris, at Albion Rooms, at 8.
22. Brixton Branch: Mr. J. S. Baines's Evening at Brixton Independent Church.
25. Chesterfield Branch: "In Dickens Land," by Mr. G. G. Philpott, at Trinity Institute, at 8.
    London: Dance and Social of the Needlework and Charitable Guild, at St. Bride's Institute, Fleet Street, E.C., at 7. Tickets, 2s. to members, 2s. 6d. non-members.
26. Stockport Branch: Annual Meeting, at Sunday School, at 8.
    Sheffield Branch: Social at Cutlers' Hall, at 8.
    Hull Branch: Annual Meeting.
    Shrewsbury Branch: Meeting, at Alkmund's Rooms, at 8.
27. Brighton Branch: Dramatic Recital by Mr. F. J. Gauntlett, at Steine House.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH

BOOKS

A Child's History of England and *American Notes and Pictures from Italy*, being Vols. 12 and 13 of the "National Edition." London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd.

A Tale of Two Cities and *Barnaby Rudge*, being Vols 1 and 2 of the "Popular Edition." Price 1s. net, cloth; and 2s. net, leather. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd.

Catalogue of Rare and Valuable Books of the Library of W. Roots, Esq., containing facsimile of original Phiz drawing. London: Hodgson and Co.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

"Boz Club Dinner" (a literary letter), with picture of "The Newest Sam Weller." *Sphere*, 23 February.

"Thackeray" (with references to Dickens), illustrated. By Holbrook Jackson. *Yorkshire Weekly Post*, 23 February.

"Eatanswill and Sudbury." *Daily Chronicle* (Office Window), 6 March; *East Anglian Daily Times*, 4 March; *Bazaar*, 20 February; *Essex and Suffolk News*, 9 March.

"Cheeryble House." *Manchester City News*, 2 and 9 March (illustrated); *Liverpool Echo*, 28 February; *Manchester Guardian*, 28 February and 11 March; *Property Market Review*, 9 March; *Pall Mall Gazette* (illustrated), 9 March; *Manchester Dispatch* (illustrated), 1, 2, and 12 March; *Daily Express*, 11 March; *Yorkshire Post*, 13 March.

"The Finest Novel I Have Read" (*David Copperfield*), by Princess Irena de Avierino-Wiszniewska. *Girl's Realm*, February.

"The Plagiarisms of Dickens." *T. P.'s Weekly*, 1, 8, 15, 22 March.

"The Story of the 'Cheeryble' Grants." By Rev. W. Hume Elliot. Reviews in *Morning Post*, 7 March; *T. P.'s Weekly*, 15 March; *Daily Chronicle*, 9 March; *Daily Telegraph*, 8 March.

"A Ramble in Dickens Land," by Victor Rousseau. (Illustrated.) *Weekly Irish Times, Dublin*, 16 February.

"A Little Portrait Gallery," by E. V. Lucas; VI, "John Poole and Dickens." *T.P.'s Weekly*, 15 March.

"Old Frank Curzon: Reminiscences of Dickens." *Yorkshire Evening Post*, 8 March.

"Charles Dickens and Dundee." *Dundee Courier*, 6 March.

"Gissing and Dickens." *T. P.'s Weekly*, 8 March.

"Books and Bookmen" ("Nicholas Nickleby and Plagiarisms"). *Manchester Guardian*, 9 March.

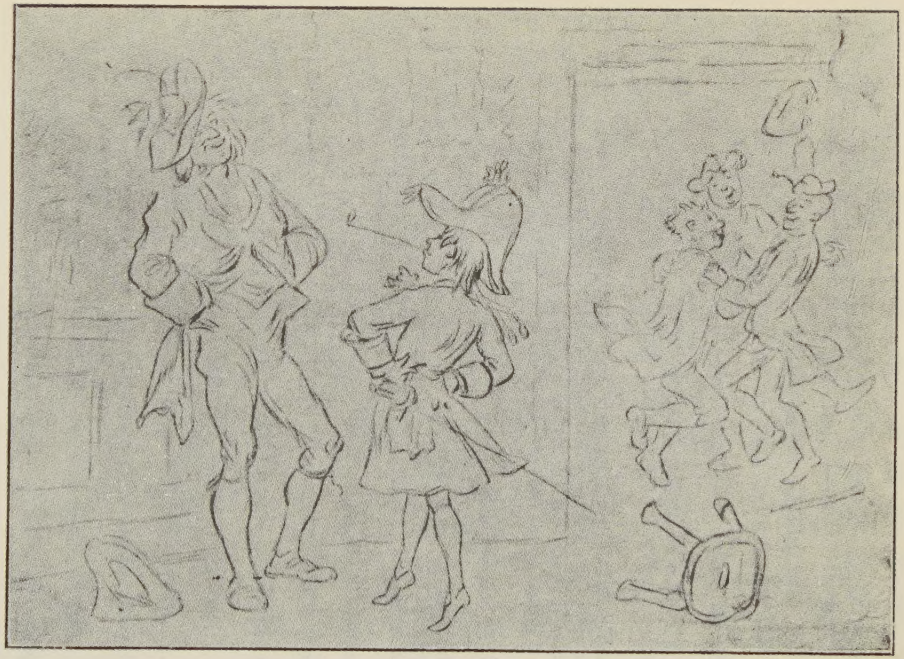
"The Makers of Books: iv. The Publishers of Dickens and Carlyle," by J. P. C. Illustrated. *Pall Mall Magazine*, April.

"Recollections of Charles Dickens," by Francesco Berger. *Sphere*, 16 and 23 March.

"Local Connections with Charles Dickens." *Eastern Morning News*, 16 March.

"Gems of the South Kensington Collection" (Dickens and W. P. Frith). (Illustrated.) *Strand Magazine*, March.

We have received a copy of *Real Dickens Landmarks*, just issued by Mr. Robt. H. Fryar, Bath, price 2s. 6d. per copy, packing and postage included, which forms a companion to *Bathonian Dickensiana*. We willingly draw attention to this, not only for its Dickensian interest, but because to purchase a copy would be helping also Mr. Fryar, who has been in straitened circumstances for some time through the decease of his principal patron and employer, with whom he was for nearly twenty years.



MR. TAPPERTIT FINDS AN OLD FRIEND

From a pencil sketch by Phiz for *Barnaby Rudge*. Reproduced by permission of Mr. Walter T. Spencer